

FADE IN:

SUPER: "GERMANY - BREMEN. 1920. THE NAZI PARTY IS ON THE RISE."

EXT. BREMEN - HANDELSSTRASSE - NIGHT

WALTER HOROWITZ (22), wrapped in a heavy coat and plain fur hat, strides along Handelsstrasse, clutching his satchel. He crosses to the opposite side of the street and cuts across dark alleys whenever he suspects trouble ahead.

He glances at his watch and at the business signage above shops and factories. Many are shuttered, covered with hateful Nazi messages and insignia.

He arrives at Handelsstrasse 87. The name *Wismann Textilfabrik* is barely visible. He looks over his shoulders, knocks twice, pushes the door open and steps inside.

INT. WISMANN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

KARL WISMANN (45), neatly-parted grayish hair, dark suit, pressed, rimless glasses set in place, glances at the time. He jumps to his feet the moment he hears the handle turning.

KARL

Six-thirty. Perfect timing, Walter. Was it dangerous?

WALTER

I tried to avoid troublemakers.

KARL

It's unfortunate, so many of them.

Karl gathers several ledgers, places them on the desk.

KARL (CONT'D)

Walter, I need you to balance these ledgers.

(beat)

It's important I have them back by this Thursday.

WALTER

Three days!

KARL

Urgent. My banker is visiting Friday to approve a loan.

(beat)  
It's survival.

WALTER  
Thursday. Be assured.

Walter drops the ledgers into his satchel and moves to leave.

KARL  
Thank you Walter, stay safe. Flag a cab  
if you can.  
(whispers)  
Safer for both of us.

Walter thanks him, shakes hands and exits.

INT. BREMEN - HOROWITZ APARTMENT - DAY

WALTER pores over Wismann's ledgers. His pregnant wife RUTH HOROWITZ (20) walks into his study.

WALTER  
Soon now. What did the doctor say?

RUTH  
All is fine, he thinks it's twins.

WALTER  
Wunderbar! I saw Karl last night. I got  
some work - just three days, but my work  
is drying out.

RUTH  
It always happens, political unrest,  
then business downturn.

WALTER  
So, how is my seamstress doing?

RUTH  
Four more dresses for alterations.

WALTER  
Be patient, Ruth, I have a plan.

RUTH  
How come we ended up in poverty?

WALTER  
I am a fourth generation Buschwald. We  
should be millionaires.

RUTH

What did really happen?

WALTER

The party confiscated all of my great grandfather's business. We ended up with nothing.

RUTH

That was when you changed the name.

WALTER

From Buschwald to Horowitz. We were lucky dad stashed away two gold bars. A fraction of grandad's fortune.

INT. HOROWITZ APARTMENT - DAY

1927. The twins, HANNA and EVA are now five. Walter stands in the hallway searching for his keys. The door displays two brass plaques: *ETC ETC ETC.*,

*Message here ...*

*Neither SCRIPT nor NOVEL are published.*

*The Script is 96 pages long. Used Script Studio. Courier Nuvo 12 pt.*

*IF INTERESTED TO DISCOVER FURTHER, PLEASE EMAIL THE AUTHOR ON [cvrabela@outlook.com](mailto:cvrabela@outlook.com) or PM ME.*

*What follows is the actual Novel which is also fully completed.*

# Whodunnit! The Wheelchair Murders

Charles V Abela

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ISBN: 9798273695665

WHODUNNIT!  
THE WHEELCHAIR MURDERS

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Author

REPROGRAMMING THE PRESIDENT (Novel & Script)

ALL THE PRESIDENTS' MAN (Script)

THE BUGATTI CAPERS (Novel)

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## Whodunnit! The Wheelchair Murders

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## Character Names

Walter Horowitz	Refugee from Bremen, Germany
Ruth Horowitz	Walter's Wife
Hanna Horowitz	Twin Daughter
Eva Horowitz	Twin Daughter
Sarah Bernhagen	Eva Horowitz's assumed name
Karl Wismann	Bremen. Owner. Textile Business
Sam Goldstein	Shares house with Sarah Bernhagen
Ruben Herzog	Sam Goldstein's boyfriend
Hermann Wolfe	NYC lawyer – Refugee sponsor
Henry Wolfe	Son – works from same NYC office
Kurt Steinberg	US House of Representatives
Ludwig Kraut	US diplomat in Germany
Klaus Hammer	Bremen. Casket Maker in Bremen
Helmut Hammer	Refugee. Casket Maker in Brooklyn
Gunther Rabinowitz	Bremen. Funeral services
Don Collins	Wheelchair salesman
Major Reynolds	Frank Delaney's boss
Frank Delaney	BCI Margaretville HQ, NY State
Tom Jenkins	Detective. Works for Frank Delaney
Bogdan Petrovski	Detective. Works for Frank Delaney

## 1

***THE EARLY DAYS***

The year, 2021. It was winter in Europe. And a very severe one at that. Germany was faring just as badly as its northern neighbors. This industrial giant of Europe suddenly seemed to have dropped a couple of gears.

Nowhere was it more evident than in the city-port of Bremen, a gateway to the world, renowned for its maritime, and shipbuilding industry. It was experiencing bad freezing weather, but the third week in January seemed more forgiving.

More people ventured outside, and with the streets clear of snow and sludge, the shops were busy and coffee shops crowded. There was a feeling of a return to normality, but the nights still felt severe.

The weather was closing in. Darkness had already settled in the dimly lit streets of Bremen. In certain areas, fog and mist cut visibility to just fifty yards, although the six o'clock chime from the town clock had not yet sounded.

Walter Horowitz thought to himself that going to such a late meeting on a night like this was a blessing in disguise. Bad weather had its benefits, playing a huge part in keeping Nazi hooligan gangs far less active in the streets.

Wrapped in a heavy coat and a plain fur hat, he strode along Handelsstrasse, clutching his satchel. He crossed from one side of the street to the other and cut across dark alleys whenever he suspected trouble ahead.

He kept glancing at his watch and at the business signage above shops and factories — both hard to read. Many shops were shuttered, covered with hateful Nazi messages, insignia and the dreaded Swastika.

Finally, he arrived at Handelsstrasse 87. The name above the shop entrance — *Wismann Textilfabrik* — was barely visible. He looked over his shoulders once, twice and then knocked on the door, pushed it open and stepped inside.

Karl Wismann, forty-fivish, neatly-parted grayish hair, dark suit, pressed, rimless glasses set in place, was anxiously waiting to meet his new young accountant. He jumped to his feet the moment he heard the door handle turning.

“Six-thirty. Perfect timing, Walter. Did you walk and was it dangerous?”

“Both. Yes, it’s rough outside and I tried to avoid troublemakers.”

“It’s unfortunate. There is so much turmoil in our country at the moment.”

Then he continued, “You’re so young, twenty-two and I believe recently married. I knew your father well and we did some business together.”

“I remember him mentioning your business. I understand it’s textiles specializing in light fabrics.”

“That’s correct, but it’s been tough of late. Does your wife work?”

“Seamstress.”

“Excellent, I may have some work for her soon.”

Karl gathered several ledgers, placed them on the desk.

“Walter, I need you to balance these ledgers,” said Karl, hesitating for a moment.

He fixed his gaze on Walter and then made a point.

“But it’s important I have them back by this Thursday.”

“That’s only three days, Mr. Wismann!”

“True, but this job is extremely urgent. My banker is visiting me this Friday to approve a loan. We will only survive if the loan is approved.”

“I fully understand, in that case, it’s Thursday. Be assured.”

Walter dropped the ledgers into his satchel and moved to leave.

“Walter, stay safe. Flag down a cab if you can ... it’s safer for both of us.”

Walter thanked him, shook hands and left.

## 2

***THE HOROWTIZ TWINS***

Walter married Ruth Merkel in the spring of 1920, just after the First World War and before the Nazi movement began to rise in Germany.

He was a modest but meticulous accountant – methodical, reliable, and rarely distracted. Ruth worked as a seamstress out of her parents’ home, skilled with a needle and proud of her independence. Together, they settled into a small but respectable flat on Gartenstraße, in the Mitte district of Bremen where they continued with their respective professions.

Walter ran his accounting practice from his study crowded with books, files and clients’ financial documents. A shiny brass plaque on the door read *Walter Horowitz, Buchhalter*. Beside it hung another sign in a more delicate script: *Ruth Horowitz – Schneiderin*.

From that humble setup they carved out a quiet, disciplined life marked by routine and modest ambition.

In 1922, Ruth gave birth to identical twin daughters, Hanna and Eva. Hanna had two distinct birthmarks, each about an inch across – one on the side of her neck, the other more visible, on the back of her right hand. They were reddish smears, hard to miss, and often the first thing people noticed. Eva had no such marks.

Even as children, the difference between them was quietly emphasized by the way their father seemed to look at them.

Eva always believed that her father favored Hanna. It was nothing he said aloud, and nothing her mother would have admitted, but Eva felt it all the same. She never voiced it, yet it colored her childhood and deepened a quiet sense of isolation that she carried like a second skin. At times, it felt like a blister ready to burst.

Hanna spun her doll triumphantly and beamed. “See? She’s the fastest!”

Eva rolled her eyes. “Yeah, yeah... you always get to be first anyway.”

Hanna paused, tilting her head, as if sensing the weight behind her sister’s words. “I don’t get to be first all the time,” she said softly. Then, with a grin, she added, “Dad let me learn the x table yesterday! He even showed me how to add big numbers in my head!”

Eva’s doll wobbled in her hand. “He... he didn’t show me.” Her voice was quiet, almost a whisper, but the sting was there. Hanna’s smile faltered. She knew. “Maybe tomorrow,” she said. “I’m sure he’ll show you too.”

Eva snorted, spinning her doll sharply. “He always shows you. Always. You get the big numbers, the tables, everything. I’m just... me.”

Hanna's eyes flashed with a mix of defensiveness and pride. "I'm not his favorite!" she shot back. "He told me he wants you to go to America someday, so you can have more fun than me! That's because he's favoring you, not me."

Eva froze, her doll tilting dangerously. Then she scowled, lips pressed tight. "Yeah, well... I don't care! You still get all the fun here!"

Hanna looked at her twin, guilt flickering across her face. "I... I don't mean to," she said, patting Eva's hand. "You're better at spinning your doll anyway."

Eva's frown softened into a small, wry smile. "Only because mine doesn't have stupid marks on her neck."

Hanna laughed, and for a moment the tension melted into childish chaos. But the unspoken truth lingered: their father's affection had drawn invisible lines between them, and even their dolls seemed to know it.

In a sudden, fiery rage, Eva seized her doll, snatched her mother's scissors from the table, and with one sharp motion, sliced its head off, grabbed it as it rolled across the floor, hurled it at Hanna, striking her face before it skidded across the rug and stormed out, kicking the head and leaving a silence heavier than any game.

As political tensions escalated across Germany during the 1930s, danger crept closer to Jewish families like the Horowitzes. Anti-Semitic rhetoric turned into policies, and policies into something far worse. When Eva turned ten, her parents made a painful and desperate decision – to send her away.

That same year, with the help of a family friend, an American attorney named Hermann Wolfe, Eva was smuggled out of Germany.

Wolfe had been born in Bremen but had built a new life in New York. He still had contacts in both cities and used those ties to help families escape. Through forged documents, bribes, and sheer nerve, he managed what seemed impossible. Eva was one of the lucky few.

With her parents' consent, she was hidden aboard the SS Bremen and sent across the Atlantic as a stowaway. The plan had been arranged through Wolfe's contacts and aided by a sympathetic crewman named Otto Reisinger, a steward in his late forties who had served in the merchant navy since before the war. Otto wasn't political. If anything, he was quietly disgusted by the loud nationalism spreading through the ports. When Wolfe asked for his help, he didn't hesitate.

Otto concealed Eva in the baggage hold, wedged between steamer trunks and shipping crates, wrapped in a dockworker's coat. At night, he brought her scraps of food and whispered updates. She was told not to cry, not to speak unless necessary, and to move only when instructed. She never forgot the sound of Otto's soft voice in the dark – calm, practical, and kind in a world turning colder by the day.

Hidden on that same ship was a boy named Helmut Hammer, the son of a casket maker from Bremen. Where Eva was still and watchful, Helmut seemed ready to burst. Even in silence he fidgeted, tapping fingers, mouthing words to

no one. They barely spoke, but Eva never forgot the tension in him – like a firecracker lit and buried.

In New York, Wolfe arranged for Eva to assume a new identity. Her name was changed, her accent softened, her past erased by paper and promise. Yet the loss clung to her quietly – an ache that never quite healed.

Five years later, in 1937, Wolfe intervened again. This time he helped Walter, Ruth, and Hanna escape. Through connections, cash, or both, they bought their way out. The Horowitzes fled Germany and resettled in the United States.

They landed on American shores in late October 1937, five years after Eva's escape. Safe now – or as safe as they could be. But nothing would ever be quite the same.

They chose a quiet property in Fleischmanns, New York – a modest house nestled among the trees at the foothills of the Catskills. Far from the city and far from the life they had left behind.

By then, Ruth was already struggling with early-onset arthritis – slow, unrelenting, and worsening by the year. The wheelchair was not yet part of Walter's or Ruth's life, but its shadow had begun to form.

It had been a stressful five years, but the strain had begun long before they reached the New World.

Etc etc etc.,